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ABSTRACT

This review of the Carnegie Report on Teaching, "A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century" presents an overview the report's goals for the future of the teaching profession. Written by the Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, the report goal's were to: (1) remind America of its economic challenges; (2) "assert the primacy of education as the foundation of economic growth, equal opportunity, and a shared national vision"; (3) reaffirm that "the teaching profession is the one best hope for establishing new standards of excellence"; and (4) point out that the next decade provides a very special "window of opportunity" for reforming education. This snyopsis of the report describes: the situation of educational reform; a scenario of schools of the future; the reform plan; details for teaching staff (standards, incentives, teaching environment, salaries, and restructuring of teacher preparation); and implementing the plan. (CB)

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SYNOPSIS OF THE CARNEGIE REPORT ON TEACHING: A NATION PREPARED: TEACHERS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

by

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SMERC Information Center
San Mateo County Office of Education

August 1986

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The Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy was founded in 1985 to carry out a ten-year agenda on education and economic growth. One of its first acts was to create the Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, "in recognition of the central role teachers play in the quality of education."(p6) Task Force members include Chairman Lewis Branscomb (Chief Scientist and vice-president of IBM), Mary Hatwood Futrell of NEA and Albert Shanker of AFT, California State Schools Superintendent Bill Honig, Governor Thomas Kean of New Jersey, and nine others--none of them K-12 educators.

They wrote this report to: (1) remind America of the economic challenges we face; (2) "assert the primacy of education as the foundation of economic growth, equal opportunity, and a shared national vision;" (3) reaffirm that "the teaching profession is the one best hope for establishing new standards of excellence . . ." and (4) point out that the next decade provides a very special "window of opportunity" for reforming education. (p7)

THE SITUATION

The Task Force views the educational reforms since 1983 as repairing the schools. They choose, instead to rebuild them, in order to meet drastic economic change. We must now go forward to higher standards, they say, in order to compete in the world economy and in order not to let the schools slip backwards under the pressure of increasing numbers of poor/minority students.(p11)

We also must consider equal education opportunity and citizenship as school goals.(p14) We have a "serious functional literacy problem" to correct, but we must also emphasize higher order thinking skills.(p15) These are the types of skills we need to teach for the future: "a good intuitive grasp," ability to "see patterns of meaning," "a cultivated creativity," cooperation, ability to learn how to learn, humaneness and caring, ability to act independently and think for oneself, critical judgement.(p20) America may have trouble developing such skills because, as a nation, we place little value on real intellectual effort.(p20-21)

THE CHALLENGE

We must functionally re-design our school system, because the things that must be done cannot be accomplished by the old methods. The learner must be active; the focus of the school must shift from teaching to learning. But the teacher's role then becomes more--not less--important because s/he must model the capacity for lifelong learning that we want to develop in all students.(p25)

The retirement of so many senior teachers and the new Baby Boom--we'll need to hire 1.3 million new teachers between 1986 and 1992--gives us a great "window of opportunity" for turning the profession around.(p26) Teacher education enrollments and applicants' SAT scores are up slightly,

but not enough.(p31) On the downside, "almost half of the students enrolling in teacher education come from non-academic high school programs" and the proportion of minority teachers is declining.(p32)

Our challenge is to meet the rising demand for teachers in the face of a declining supply of quality candidates.(p32)

SIEZING THE OPPORTUNITY

In the past, we've lowered standards when we needed teachers, but now we "would have to scrape the bottom of the barrel. . ." thus making the teaching career even less attractive to the professionally-minded.(p35) Instead, we'll have to: (1) raise standards for entering teachers; (2) retain our good teachers, and (3) maximize the use of everyone's skills.(p35)

Raising standards for professional entry during a labor shortage would be "electric"--getting the message out to the nation that we are serious about having good teachers. But we can't suddenly change the rules on those already teaching and we'll have to make a massive effort to recruit minority teachers.(p25,39)

The Task Force views the present teaching profession as a "feminized occupation," "semiskilled," with "increasingly intolerable" working conditions, no professional decisionmaking or collegiality.(p39) Teachers seldom get the kind supplies, work space, or staff support that other professsionals take for granted; they spend 10-50% of their time on non-instructional matters. Senior teachers perform the same jobs as novices; experience counts for nothing.(p40) The current "eggcrate" organization of one-teacher-per-classroom does not allow maximum use of talent and resources.(p41)

But there are causes for optimism in the attention generated by the recent reform movement and in polls saying that Americans are willing to

pay more for improved education.(p41)

SCHOOLS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY: A SCENARIO

An imaginary high school of the year 2000 is run by a staff of professional teachers holding advanced certificates "with an Executive Committee of Lead Teachers in overall charge."(p45) The professional teaching staff is supplemented by volunteeers, aides, tutors, interns, and residents. The school is strongly linked to its low-income community and to business through various projects, partnerships, and internships for the students.(p46-47) Its focus is on developing students who are strong in analysis and synthesis and who have the "healthly skepticism of inquiring minds," along with creativity and a solid knowledge base.(p45,48) Many instructional groupings are used, including cross age tutoring and teaching teams.(p45-8) The teachers design their own goals and instructional plan, based on community needs and government requirements. They work on a bonus system, so the higher the objectives they set and attain, the more compensation they receive.(p49) The teachers' Executive Committee hires the school administrator and contracts with the district or other agencies for services such as testing.(p50) Under this scenario, teachers are very enthusiastic, saying that the dropout problem has all but disappeared and that even non-college-bound students are far more academically successful than they were under the old system.(p51)

THE PLAN

The goal of the Carnegie plan is: "a system in which school districts can offer the pay, autonomy and career opportunities necessary to attract to teaching highly qualified people who would otherwise take up other professsional careers. In return, teachers would agree to higher standards for themselves and real accountability for student performance. . ."

Authority would be grounded in the collegial professional community, not in a bureaucracy.(p55)

The major elements of the Plan are (p55-7):

*a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards;

*a restructuring of the schools to free teachers and to hold them accountable for student progress;

*establishment of a career path for teachers, culminating in the Lead Teacher position;

*abolition of the undergraduate teaching credential, with all teacher education moved to the graduate level and a restructured field-based curriculum;

*strong efforts to recruit minorities into teaching;

*a school environment that bases teacher incentives on schoolwide student performance and that provides the tools (aides, equipment, etc.) that teachers need to make advances in productivity; and

*funding that makes teacher salaries competitive with those of similar professions.

The Task Force warns that all these elements must be taken as a whole, for they reinforce each other.(p57)

DETAILS

A Professional Environment for Teachers The Task Force recommends that local sites:

*give teachers discretion and autonomy to set goals under general guidelines,

*foster collegial decisionmaking and cooperation under Lead Teachers,

*provide the support staff teachers need to be productive, and

*consider a variety of approaches to school leadership.(p56)

The Task Force considers professional autonomy to be "the first

requirement" of their plan(p58), and more time for teachers to "reflect, plan, and discuss" as "fundamental."(p60) Lead Teachers should have substantial power, for example, being responsible for remediating/dismissing incompetent teachers (p58), but the Task Force stops short of recommending abolition of the principalship. They suggest that--adapted to promote staff collegiality--the current style of principalship can work, but that we should experiment with other models, too.(p61)

The professional teaching staff is to be the core of the school. It is to be supplemented (current teacher-student ratios are not to change) by a wide variety of aides: community and business volunteers, high school and college students, student teacher interns and residents.(p60-1)

We should move toward more flexible use of space (away from classroom "boxes") and toward school site budgeting and control, giving teachers and administrators the power they must have to go with their new accountability for student achievement.(p61)

Districts and intermediate units should become "cost centers . . . which have to sell their services to the schools in order to survive"(p61). State, federal, and district rules that inhibit local decisionmaking should be reduced. The Task Force recognizes this as an "enormous job" and one that must be done with a "great deal of sensitivity" if at-risk students are to retain their regulatory protection.(p61) Finally, the district's fuction should be to set broad educational goals, monitor schools, and be prepared to intervene if a school site fails.(p63)

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards This new body will define "what teachers need to know and what they should be able to do."(p62) The majority of the Board is to be elected by Board-certified

teachers (presumably when they exist); the rest of the Board will be made up of other education professionals, public officials, and lay persons.(p66) The Board will prepare two levels of voluntary teacher certification: the Teacher Certificate, indicating a high level of competence, and the Advanced Teacher Certificate, designating teaching excellence and school leadership.(p62) It will also establish recertification standards, a code of ethics, and disciplinary procedures. It will advise policy and conduct research on teacher employment issues.(p66)

The certification exams developed by the Board should judge the candidate's general education, mastery of subject specialty, knowledge of good teaching, and ability to reach and motivate students from different backgrounds. No set preparation or schedule for the exams is suggested.(p62) State-of-the-art assessment techniques (including observation) should be used, and standards should be drawn from the teacher effectiveness research and from the example of practicing teachers, especially those who are effective with low-income students.(p66-7)

The Board should make special efforts to assist minority students and minority colleges in reaching the higher standards.(p67) The system is designed to help teachers, not to eliminate them.(p67)

State licensing boards will continue to license all teachers, and they may wish to raise their standards on the example of those set by the National Board. Board certification will initially be voluntary, but eventually it is likely to mesh with state licensing regulations.(p64)

The Task Force envisons many teachers wanting to participate, because Board certification will be a clear statement of professional merit and Certified teachers can expect to be eagerly recruited and well paid by districts.(p67)

States and localities should prepare for this new class of teachers by designing district incentive and pay schemes to promote their hiring and by arranging that poorer districts have equal opportunity to compete for their services.(p67-8)

States should set high standards for teacher education and for alternate teacher preparation programs. They should also set a date after which emergency credentials will no longer be granted or used.(p64,68)

The following benefits should accrue from establishing the National Board for Professional Teaching(p69):

*teachers will get a chance to define excellence for themselves, as other professions do;

*public confidence in teachers will rise;

*teachers will have a stake in enforcing the professsional standards they helped to create;

*certification by a national board will promote career mobility and advancement;

*states will gain a rigorous teacher assessment system without having to pay the development costs; and

*everyone will have agreed-upon standards for professional competence.

Restructuring Teacher Education Teacher preparation should also focus on "what teachers need to know and be able to do."(p69) All teacher education would occur at the graduate level in the Master of Teaching program, prefaced by a solid liberal education and an undergraduate subject major.(p70) Colleges should re-examine their Bachelors programs to see that major coursework is appropriate to the teaching career, as it is now designed with other careers in mind.(p72,75) The undergraduate program should have a rigorous common core featuring "history, government, science,

literature, and the arts" to develop the "essential skills of comprehension, writing, speaking, and clear thinking."(p73)

The Master of Teaching program would probably be two years long, consisting of summer coursework, a paid first-year internship, graduate courses, and a second school term of paid residency, preferrably in a recognized "clinical school" (likened to a teaching hospital). Although it gives much attention to this particular model, Task Force asserts that it doesn't advocate any one mode of teacher preparation. "What is essential is a strong element of field-based preparation, emphasizing opportunities for careful reflection on teaching integrated with a demanding program of academic coursework."(p76)

Colleges and districts should also develop continuing education programs.(p72) Eventually the National Board should develop recertification requirements to encourage teachers to stay current. The Board should draw on the national societies, like the National Science Teachers Association, for subject updates.(p78)

Scholarships should be offered in teacher shortage areas; minorities should be recruited to teacher education; and incentives offered to the brightest students.(p70,72) The cost of teacher education should be related to a teacher's lifetime earning expectations.(p73)

Training of support staff and aides should not be neglected.(p78)

Recruiting minority teachers is a special problem. Minorities are now 25% of our student population; they'll be 33% by 2000. Yet by 1990, only 5% of all teachers will be Black.(p79) Minority college attendance is declining, so there is no way we can actually get the 50,000 minority teachers we'll need each year. Our best strategy is a a full-scale, long-term commitment to minority education, K-College: continuing early childhood and compensatory education, forming parnerships to keep at-risk

students in school, using minority college students and community members as school tutors, strengthening minority retention programs in higher education, encouraging transfers beyond junior college (where most college students with minority backgrounds are located), and offering financial incentives and service payback programs. (p80,83-87)

Within this chapter, sidebars briefly describe some programs of which the Task Force apparently approves. They include a Stanford University multidisciplinary undergraduate program(p73); the University Teaching Center at Carnegie Mellon for faculty development(p74); a teacher recruitment program, 5-STEP, at Kenyon and Bank Street Colleges(p75); the Schenley High School Teacher Center in Pittsburgh(p76-77); public school tutoring as a work-study option at some California colleges and universities(p78); and academic encouragement programs for minority students.(p82)

Incentives, Performance, and Productivity Americans already spend more per capita on schools than any other free world nation, but our system rewards neither high productivity (measured as student achievement) nor cost efficiency.(p87) We need to develop common federal, state, and local yardsticks linking teacher compensation to schoolwide performance. (Schoolwide performance is suggested as the criteria because the contribution of any one individual is too hard to measure and because collegiality is promoted when the focus is on a schoolwide goal.)(p91)

Noting that business productivity can be improved by administrative methods and/or by market forces, the Task Force suggests a few ideas for education. One administrative approach would be to set a few, clear goals and appropriate assessment methods, with parent and teacher involvement.(p91) The higher the achieved goal; the greater the reward. We

don't yet have a system for tying teacher salaries to student performance, but there's no reason we can't develop one, if teachers cooperate. Under any system, some schools aren't going to make it. Districts must be ready to intercede.(p92)

There are many possible market approaches, some of which require due caution for equal education opportunity: speciality schools; open enrollments or vouchers within or across districts; freelance teaching teams who could contract with a school to perform specific services; or productive use of technology.(p92-3)

Labor Management Issues The heart of this report is that teachers must be involved, and this will usually be done through their union. A "confrontational stance" by the school board and/or the union could "doom these recommendations. . . . Both sides need to try hard to overcome a legacy of conflict and confrontation."(p95)

Teacher Salaries and Benefits Beginning teachers' salaries should "attract and retain teachers of high academic ability."(p96) Continuing education credits should not be figured in for salary(p77); rather salary should be determined by: "(1)Job Function--Level of responsibility. (2)Competence--As determined by level of Board certification. (3)Seniority--Experience in the classroom. (4)Productivity--Contribution to improved student performance."(p96)

States and localities should ensure equitable distribution of teachers to needy schools and districts through assistance to minority teacher candidates, equalization grants, and recruitment incentives to teachers (e.g., more pay, a larger support staff, better conditions).(p103)

To compete with other professions, ditricts will have to pay at least mid-range on the scale for comparably-trained employees such as accountants. The Task Force realizes that districts can't do this

overnight, but suggests that they get started.(p99) They assume that salaries will be set locally, and they imply use of both ten- and twelve-month contracts.(p100-1)

Full reciprocity must be arranged between states, so that we can have a fully mobile, national teacher market. At present, a teacher who moves may be penalized on credetials, retirement, and/or years of experience allowed for salary credits. Such barriers to personal advancement and efficient use of the labor force "must be dismantled."(p102-3)

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

The Task Force believes that Americans will willingly pay for these reforms, if they take seriously the threat of educational decline leading to economic decline. Besides, the improvements will not cost much more than maintaining the status quo, which would result in a substantial decline in teacher quality.(p107)

They see some immediate sources of funding in worthwhile budget shifts from administration to instruction: "Large central office bureaucracies not only have reserved to themselves a broad range of decisionmaking authority that should be reassigned to schools, but have also managed to capture a growing share of local resources."(p107-8)

They also envison their plan being so much more productive and efficient that it "promises a host of cost savings that may not be so immediately obvious."(p108) For example, students may be able to move through school faster, schools and colleges won't have to spend so much on remediation.(p108) In the long run, savings can be made on teacher education, because if teaching is an attractive career, we won't need to replace the 50 percent of each new teacher cohort lost within the first seven years.(p108) Schools will also save money in coming years as older

teachers retire to be replaced by lower-salaried novices.(p110)

The Task Force estimates that the incremental cost of their program could be covered by an average annual increase of 2.8% for 10 years or 1.19% for 15 years. Over the last 15 years the economy has experienced an average annual growth rate of 2.7%, so these costs simply maintain education's portion of the Gross National Product, instead of letting it decline.(p109) The costs, particularly at first, will be mainly for competitive teacher salaries and the influx of support personnel, although the money for tutors and aides will be "fairly minimal." (p109)

Federal aid cound help poorer states and districts in the competition for Board-certified teachers, but the Task Force admits that "the federal government's current fiscal circumstances make immediate action along such lines highly improbable."(p111)

This report concludes with "an open invitation to join the work ahead," including the immediate planning of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. The Task Force specially invites involvement by teachers; state policy leaders; local educators and communities; higher education; and finally by students, who are invited to consider a career in education: "We invite you to become the key to the nation's future--to its prosperity, to opportunity for all, to the maintenance of our democracy. You will have the whole nation behind you. It cannot be otherwise. There is too much at stake."(p113)

EPILOGUE

Only two Task Force members chose to append individual comments to the report(p117-118).

Mary Hatwood Futrell of the NEA endorses may of the report's ideas "wholeheartedly," but she has "deep reservations" about the impression given in the report that teachers are not doing their job; the development

of the national board; the abuse potential in the Lead Teacher concept which is too much like "the flawed and failed" merit pay and career ladder plans; and market approaches, such as vouchers, that will lead to inequity. She rejects the idea of tying salaries to student performance because there are no good measures that can do it. She is not pleased that the report advocates a single model--the Masters--for teacher preparation when numerous options are being proposed and debated. "Further, no mention is mande of the need for increased funding to teacher education."

Albert Shanker of the AFT says little more than, "Along with other members of the Task Force who have refrained from expressing any differences in order to realize the greater goal, I give overall endorsement to the report."

Copies of A Nation Prepared may be obtained by sending a check or purchase order (payable to: Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy) to:

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